

Teaching Marketing to Adult Learners

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Abstract

According to the literature, adult learners are fundamentally different than traditional students, and are a rapidly growing population on American college and university campuses. Adult learners, that is those over the age of 25, are expected to grow faster than what is commonly described as traditional students. And, due to increased competition for students many institutions of higher learning are encouraging their faculty to understand the motivations, needs, and expectations of adult learners. This shift in focus from traditional students is especially apparent for those who teach fundamental courses that attract adult learners due to the practicality of such disciplines, such as marketing. The author explores teaching marketing principles to adult learners and offers certain heuristics that support engagement and achievement of learning objectives.

Keywords: Adult learner, nontraditional student, teaching, and marketing.

Relevance to Marketing Educators, Researchers, and Practitioners:

According to current research the adult learner population is growing at a pace faster than what is viewed as traditional students. Added to this, colleges and universities are encouraging their faculty to understand the needs and expectations of adult learners. This is especially true for courses that instruct on the fundamentals of courses such as marketing, which provide a foundation for those seeking a career in a business-related profession.

Track: Education/Experiential Learning

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